

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2730

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S E C R E T SANTIAGO 1989

LIMDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SHUM

SUBJECT: CHILE: REQUEST FOR USG VIEWS RE UNACTION ON VIETNAM

1. FONMIN CARVAJAL ASKED ME TO SEE HIM ON SHORT NOTICE APRIL 3. SAID PRESIDENT PINOCHET WOULD BE RETURNING FROM SOUTH THIS AFTERNOON APRIL 3 AND HAD TELEPHONED AHEAD THAT HE WISHED TO DISCUSS WITH FONMIN THE POSSIBILITY OF A CHILEAN MOVE IN THE UN TO DENOUNCE HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY NVN AND VIET CONG, HAVING IN MIND STATUS OF VIETNAM REFUGEES IN TERRITORY BEING LOST BY GVN. FONMIN ASKED ME FOR MY VIEWS ON FEASIBILITY OF SUCH AN OPERATION.

2. I TOLD CARVAJAL THAT I HAD NO SPECIAL INFORMATION ON SITUATION, APART FROM OUR NORMAL, UNCLASSIFIED SOURCES. GAVE HIM VARIOUS WIRELESS FILE ARTICLES AND STATEMENTS PRESENTING USG POINT OF VIEW ON VIOLATION OF PARIS ACCORDS AND HUMANITARIAN ACTION ON BEHALF OF VIETNAM REFUGEES. SAID THAT I WOULD OF COURSE HAVE TO SPEAK ON ENTIRELY PERSONAL BASIS BEYOND THAT POINT.

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3. CONTINUING, I SAID THAT IN HIS TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT FONMIN MIGHT WISH TO BEAR TWO POINTS IN MIND. FIRST, THE TREMENDOUS PRESS AND MEDIA PLAY REGARDING THE FATE OF THE VIETNAM REFUGEES DEALT VERY LARGELY WITH A SITUATION OCCURRING IN AREAS STILL UNDER GVN JURISDICTION. WHILE COMMUNIST OFFENSIVE WAS CERTAINLY UNDERLYING CAUSE FOR PANIC AND TREMENDOUS SUFFERING, COMMUNISTS COULD NOT TO THIS EXTENT BE ACCUSED OF DIRECT COMPLICITY. BREAKDOWN HAD OCCURRED, IN OTHER WORDS, IN GVN LOCAL ADMINISTRATION BEFORE TERRITORIAL TAKE-OVER BY COMMUNISTS, AND THAT WAS BASICALLY WHAT HAD BEEN PHOTOGRAPHED AND TELEVISED. FATE OF REFUGEES ONCE COMMUNISTS HAD TAKEN OVER WOULD NO DOUBT BE TERRIBLE, BUT I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT AT THIS EARLY STAGE, AND PROBABLY EVEN LATER, TO OBTAIN THE KIND OF FACTUAL EVIDENCE SO FULLY PROVIDED BY THE FREE PRESS WITHIN GVN-CONTROLLED TERRITORY. SUCH EVIDENCE WOULD BE NEEDED TO MAKE A CASE IN THE UN.

4. SECOND POINT I MADE WAS THAT GOC SHOULD IN MY OPINION BE VERY CAREFUL TO CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES IF IT INTENDED ACTUALLY TO PROPOSE THAT A UN ORGAN CONSIDER, AS A FORMAL AGENDA ITEM, HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN VIETNAM. OUR EXPERIENCE OVER MANY YEARS HAD SHOWN THAT THE UN WAS A MOST UNSATISFACTORY AND UNFAIR FORUM FOR DEALING WITH THE VIETNAM PROBLEM. PLAIN FACT WAS THAT NEITHER CHILE NOR GVN COULD OBTAIN A FAIR HEARING AT THE UN AT THIS TIME. ONE COULD PREDICT THAT ANY UN INITIATIVE STARTED BY CHILEANS WOULD BE TAKEN OVER BY ELEMENTS HOSTILE TO THE CASE CHILE WAS PRESENTING AND WOULD THUS FAIL.

5. IN CONTRAST, I SAID, THE STATEMENT ISSUED BY CHILEAN FONOFF APRIL 2 (SEPT), WHICH I HAD GATHERED WOULD BE CIRCULATED AT THE UN, SEEMED TO ME AN ADEQUATE EXPRESSION OF THE CHILEAN POINT OF VIEW.

6. FONMIN EXPRESSED APPRECIATION AND AGREEMENT WITH MY REMARKS. ASKED ME IF I COULD NOT GET A READING FROM DEPARTMENT SOONEST, TO BE USED IN ONGOING INTERNAL CHILEAN GOVERNMENT DISCUSSION.

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7. COMMENT: I HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT CARVAJAL IS REACTING TO A HIGHLY CHARGED VISCERAL IMPULSE ON THE PART OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE ADVISERS ACCOMPANYING HIM IN THE SOUTH -- AN IMPULSE WHICH IF CARRIED THROUGH COULD BACKFIRE BADLY FOR THE CHILEANS. THIS MAY BE AN OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE THE CHILEANS SOME FRIENDLY AND USEFUL ADVICE, AND TO HELP CARVAJAL OUT OF A DIFFICULT PERSONAL

SITUATION, AND I WOULD THEREFORE WELCOME AN EXPRESSION OF
DEPARTMENT'S VIEW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, TO PASS BACK TO FONMIN.
POPPER

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